

Facilitation Tip 11: Use the Phrase, "One of the Causes"

One of the biggest benefits of using a Cause Map™ diagram to document your incident investigations is that it visually depicts all of the causes that are required to produce an incident. Still, some participants may come into the investigation with a right-answer bias or traditional root cause thinking. The word root, in root cause analysis, refers to a fibrous network of causes beneath the surface, not one cause or a type of cause. If we consider the fire triangle, it requires three causes: heat, fuel and oxygen. They are each "one of the causes" of a fire.

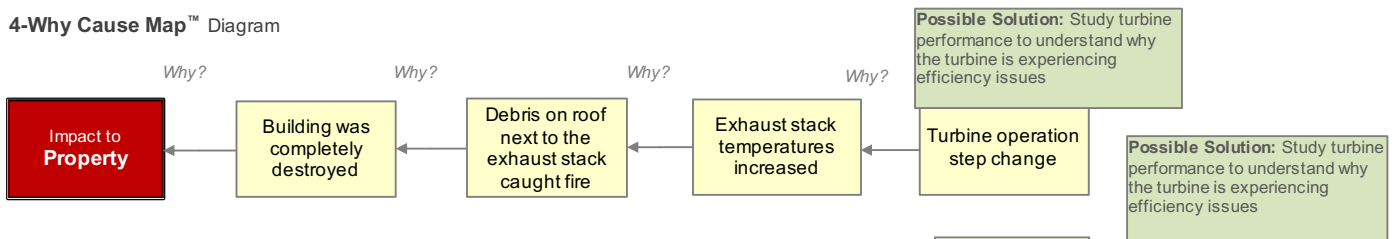
By using the phrase "one of the causes," you will achieve the following:

- Increase the team's awareness and application of the Cause Mapping® method,
- Document one perspective while inviting others to contribute, and
- Increase risk reduction by revealing the system of causes, which will lead to a variety of solutions instead of identifying just one root cause and its narrowly focused solution(s).

Building Damaged in Fire

Here's the start of an investigation where a person claims the root cause of the fire was because of the recent step change to the turbine efficiency, increasing the exhaust stack temperature. Your 5-Why Cause Map diagram may look something like:

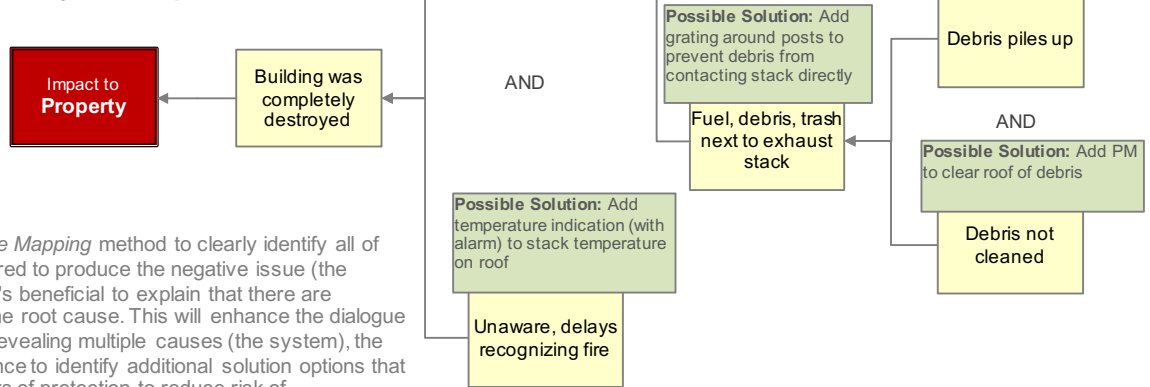
4-Why Cause Map™ Diagram



After revealing the causes that were required to produce the fire, there are additional solution opportunities outside of just controlling the heat source. While the exhaust stack temperature increase isn't ideal, it wouldn't result in a fire on its own. All of the causes (the system) are required to produce the fire.

In addition, by documenting and revealing how the fire grew, there are additional opportunities to minimize building damage through enhanced fire detection and response.

9-Why Cause Map™ Diagram



LESSON: Utilize the Cause Mapping method to clearly identify all of the causes that were required to produce the negative issue (the problem). As a facilitator, it's beneficial to explain that there are multiple causes, not just one root cause. This will enhance the dialogue in your investigations. By revealing multiple causes (the system), the team will be given the chance to identify additional solution options that will provide additional layers of protection to reduce risk of reoccurrence.

Learn how to find better solutions by diagramming the details within your problems. Hone your skills by attending a free webinar, an online short course or one of our full online Cause Mapping Root Cause Analysis workshops. Visit www.thinkreliability.com/events to see our upcoming training schedule.

Facilitation Tip 11

Click here to watch a video that further demonstrates the benefit of using "one of the causes" in your incident investigations.

(5 minutes)